

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION

No. 81.

THURSDAY, JULY 14, 1853.

PRICE 1d.
STAMPED 2d.



A TURKISH COFFEE-HOUSE.

It had been a hot day in the hottest month of the year in Turkey—to wit, July—when we went forth, close upon sundown, to enjoy a theevful ride in the suburbs of the town where we were residing, and

No. 81, 1853.

to inhale a few mouthfuls of the pleasant evening breeze, which, as though infected with the general lassitude, crept languidly along the tops of trees and the surface of the river. The Moslem part of the population were rigidly observing their annual

G G

fast of the Ramadan, which precludes them for the space of a new moon from indulging, from sunrise to sundown, in even a drop of water to assuage their thirst. During the daytime the streets had been deserted and noiseless, but now that the hour for breaking the fast was nigh at hand, everything was bustle and confusion. Shrill voices of angry and hungry women scolding within doors, famished children screaming without, sedate-looking long-bearded Turks hustling and jostling each other in the streets—some running, some walking, and all talking—presented altogether a most ludicrous and novel spectacle, and one very much at variance with the ordinary decorum observed in oriental towns. Each man was as anxious as his neighbour to emerge from the confined and close streets into the open freshness of the suburbs, and there amuse himself until the warning cry from the minaret's top should apprise him of the agreeable fact that Sol had taken his departure for the day, and that he was consequently at liberty to eat, drink, and smoke as much as he liked till sunrise next morning.

On arriving at the gates of the town, the crowd was so dense as to impede for a few minutes our outward progress. Rushing forward, however, we galloped into the open country, and, following the banks of a winding river, arrived in a few minutes at the desired point towards which the multitudes we had encountered were hastening with all possible speed. This was a noted Turkish coffee-house, celebrated amongst the Moslems for furnishing exquisite Mocha coffee and the very best procurable tobacco and timbuc—all three luxuries to the Turk, and articles of which he alone may be said to be a connoisseur. The keeper of this coffee-house was himself a strict hadji; he had twice performed the pilgrimage to the Prophet's tomb, and had consequently been dubbed with the title and assumed the garb to which such a pilgrimage entitled him, namely, a green turban and a green sash. Much respected was the hadji Achmet by all the Moslems, and very much dreaded by others. He was a thorough revolutionist, and at his coffee-house many had been the tumults planned and plotted. We, however, being Europeans, were rather held in *terrorem* by him than otherwise, for we could write and had *elchis* (ambassadors) at Stamboul. Although, therefore, his blind fanaticism caused him to detest us, fear made him pretend to love. He never, however, would open his coffee-house by day during the Ramadan, and declared he would not do so for a bagful of golden coins.

On the present occasion the doors had just been opened as we alighted, and some score of servants and hangers-on (who worked for the consideration of a cup of coffee) were busily occupied ranging all kinds of seats in front of the coffee-house for the accommodation of the Moslem multitude. Fires were being lit by dozens and heaped up with charcoal, to supply lights for the various smokers. Water too, by caldronfuls, was boiling; while diminutive coffee-pots and firepans, brightly scoured up, were ranged in martial array upon all kinds of sideboards. Then came the important operation of loading some fifty or sixty pipes, so as to be prepared for the general assault that was expected in a very few minutes' time. While all this was

going on, the open doors were barricaded with cross-bars, so as to prevent the castle being taken by storm, which it certainly would have been but for this precaution. Matters being thus arranged, the coffee-house keeper, after scrutinizing his citadel like a careful general, prepared water for his ablutions, and spread his carpet ready for his evening devotions.

Meanwhile, the banks of an adjoining river were lined with an expectant people. As soon as the muezzin cry resounded from the minaret, giving the signal that the fast was over, then a mighty splashing was heard in the stream, as though a dozen water-wheels had suddenly started into play. After this, all was silent for the space of ten minutes; but no sooner had the required forms been gone through, than the air was rent with such acclamations of delight as a parcel of schoolboys might evince on being suddenly let loose for a holiday. Having left the river, on they came helter-skelter, "first come, first served," being the pass-word for the day. Old gentlemen with long grey beards, and portly withal, ran as though their lives depended upon the race. The seats were soon rapidly filled and every inch of ground occupied; those who were furthest off and last in the race beckoning frantically to their more fortunate friends to secure places for them. Meanwhile the coffee-shop keeper and his servants enjoyed anything but a sinecure. The demands of the guests were incessant. Some wanted fire, some coffee, some wished their pipes replenished; and as the crowd increased, so the noise and the shouting became more clamorous. Hemmed in on all sides, the servants, with extended pipes in hands, would shout, "Who wants this?" while a host of voices would quickly reply, "I do! I do!" "Oh! give it to me, Mustapha!" One would clamour for a preference on the score that he was a better patron of the coffee-house than others; another on account of his age; a third on the ground of his rank; while the scuffle usually terminated in the last-comer availing himself of the turmoil to whisper to some friend to hand him over the pipe, and so getting possession of the much-coveted delicacy. There was one very stout old gentleman who must have lived at the further end of the town, judging from his late arrival; but to see him running and puffing along the banks of the river was really, in connexion with the rest of the scene, worthy of the pencil of a Hogarth. When he did arrive, however, he was more fortunate than his neighbours, for many of the first-comers had satiated themselves and were returning to their wives and families, so that there was ample room for all. After smiling at this ludicrous spectacle, we remounted our nags and entered into the town again, for the dark mists of night were rapidly gathering around.

"This is a strange method of doing penance—a curious picture of fasting and affliction," observed the friend who accompanied us, on once more regaining the gates of the town. "It is only the commencement," we replied, "of a series of amusements."

Accordingly, after partaking of our evening repast, we proceeded to the bazaar, where everything betokened festivity and mirth. As though ashamed that daylight should witness such gambols, the

night was converted into the period for indulging in a variety of childish games. The streets were illuminated, and so were the mosque and the minarets. The coffee-houses resounded with discordant Arab music, and dances were a-foot. Amid the uncertain gloom a huge camel would protrude himself into the scene of revelry, and, stretching out his long neck, commit a felony on some man's store of sugar-cane. Gaily-caparisoned horses and riders were numerous, and the veiled women thronged to and fro, talking, laughing, and commenting on all they saw or heard. Whirligigs, as they term them, and other swings, were not wanting, neither was there any lack of confectionery and good cheer. Thus the Moslems passed that night, and thus they passed every night of the thirty constituting the Ramadan.

It often happens that the Ramadan, which is a moveable fast, falls on the very hottest month of the year, and then the sufferings of the more bigoted and strict Moslems must be intense, especially in places like Cairo, where the thermometer often stands at 100° Fahrenheit in the shade. The more wealthy and rigorous observers of this fast usually confine themselves to the precincts of their houses, where they sleep away the livelong day, or else seek shelter in the dampest vaults and cellars in the neighbourhood. Most acute, however, must be the agony of thirst suffered by the poorer classes, whom necessity compels to attend to their everyday avocations. These poor benighted creatures, especially in the larger towns inhabited by mixed populations, are exposed to momentary temptations to break through the rigid observance of the penance imposed upon them by their false prophet. They see, for instance, the nominal Christian population indulging themselves in neighbouring shops, or in the open thoroughfare, with deliciously iced sherbets, or eating fruit and other cooling delicacies, while they themselves are prohibited from taking the smallest relief till the appointed hour arrives.

When a Turk travels, or is sick, he is exempted from the observance of this fast, with the stipulation that when recovered, or when arrived at his journey's end, he shall make amends for the privilege enjoyed. Of late years, however, there are hundreds in every Moslem town who are hypocrites, and who, while they make every outward demonstration of a mind and body afflicted, secretly revel in all the indulgences of this life, at the same time that they are nothing loth to join in the nocturnal carousals already described.

The scene which we have thus painted from actual observation carries, we need hardly say, its own obvious lesson. It wants that which constitutes the element of a true religious fast—unfeigned sorrow for sin. How different in all respects is it from the ordinance which the pen of inspiration has drawn:—

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen?
To loose the bands of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
And to let the oppressed go free,
And that ye break every yoke?
Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?
When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him;
And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

SUBTERRANEAN LONDON.

THERE is meaning in the old saying, that "London streets are paved with gold;" and it is perfectly true that a good many of them might be paved with gold, beaten thin, at a much less expense than they are at present paved with granite under the liberal but wise economy of the corporation of the city. Some of them are subjected to such tremendous and unceasing assaults, from the grinding of ponderous wains, the cataract of rattling, rumbling wheels, and the grappling feet of iron-shod steeds, that unless they were cased in a suit of armour something more than battle-axe proof, they would not be able to hold their own for a day. So they are swaddled in granite cut into square scales a foot thick, and in a manner overlapping each other like those of the armadillo; and this is occasionally done at a cost which it would hardly be safe to mention. The amount of hard cash that is expended, for instance, in cutting out a jacket and fitting it on, for London-bridge alone, is something alarming to think of. Well may the paviours sigh, as they always do, when consigning so much capital to inevitable destruction, the nearness or remoteness of which is dependent in a great degree upon the proper performance of their responsible duty. But we are not just now going to write about the London pavements, though we pay this passing tribute to their excellence: we are going to rip them up—which, strong as they are, we can do with a stroke of the pen—and see what lies beneath.

A being who should be gifted with a sufficient degree of clairvoyance to see through the solid ground would, upon investigating the substratum of the metropolitan ways, discover four grand arterial systems: three of which, ramifying in hundreds of thousands of branches, are employed in the never-ending performance of functions essential to the health, comfort, and convenience of a civilized existence; the fourth might strike him as a comparatively insignificant affair, consisting as it does but of a single slender line protected by a casing not broader than your hand, and projecting but here and there a branch to the world above-ground; but that slender thread is the path the lightning travels, which man has tamed to his purpose and confined in the soil beneath his feet—an obedient gnome to carry messages at his will to the ends of the earth. Considering, for our present purpose, these four subterranean agencies consecutively, we shall devote a few paragraphs to the sewerage, the supply of water, the gas, and the electric telegraph in London.

The sewers of London, as they are unquestionably the most important in a sanitary point of view, so are they the chief of the underground offspring of the necessities of a crowded metropolis. Important as they are, however, and though thousands of years ago their sanitary agency was recognised in ancient Rome, their construction in Britain was not attempted until a comparatively recent period. Not to go very far back—the London of Shakspeare and Ben Jonson had no sewers; and we may come down to the time of Milton and Cromwell, and find it still in the same condition. It was not, in fact, until the reign of Charles the Second that the first sewer, which

was made by order of the lord keeper Guildford, was constructed in Chancery-lane, which probably had its outlet in the neighbouring Thames. Notwithstanding the evident advantage which must have resulted from the first experiment, the system of draining by sewers was, from its expense and other causes, of such slow growth, that even a century later, in Hogarth's time, as we may very readily gather from his pictures, it had made but very partial progress. It is difficult at the present time to realize, even in imagination, the aspect of the London streets as they existed even at the commencement of the last century, when in many parts of the city the dust and nuisances of the houses were piled in heaps before the door, awaiting the coming of the scavenger, who gave notice of his approach by banging a wooden clapper, warning the inhabitants to thrust forth their refuse. At that time, the sewerage was suffered to accumulate in wells, which, when they were full, were emptied into the kennels of the streets. It was then that the average of deaths in the metropolis was greater in healthy seasons than it is now under the visitation of cholera, and the slaughters of typhus during a wet autumn committed more ravages than an invading army. In rainy weather, the water from the roofs came cascading into the streets through gaping spouts of metal projecting beneath the eaves, and passengers quarrelled for the wall, where a comparative shelter was obtained, because they grudged the politeness that cost a ducking. With the advance of civilization, science came to the aid of the medical art; cleanliness was discovered to be a preservative from disease, and pure air a preventive of contagion. With the recognition of these truths came the determination to practise the lessons they taught. The streets were ripped up and excavated on all sides: main sewers were built in the larger thoroughfares, and tributaries in the side streets. Acts of parliament were passed, compelling builders to provide drainage: a court of sewers for Westminster and Middlesex was established, under whose direction vast labours were undertaken and accomplished; and, by degrees, the fetid accumulations in the highways disappeared from view, the foul smells which engendered loathsome diseases became less and less perceptible, and the average duration of human life in London rose from the fearful level of the battle-field to what it is at present.

Still, though much has been done, much more remains to do. Within the limits of the city proper, it has been calculated that there are fifty miles of streets, alleys, and courts, and that in these there are not less than forty-seven miles of sewerage; so that, with regard to the city itself, little more appears necessary beyond the maintenance in good repair of the works already laid down. But the "city" forms now but a comparatively small portion of the huge Babylon clustered round St. Paul's, and we all know that there are numerous neglected and low-lying districts in the suburbs, where the business of drainage has been so shamefully overlooked that its object is altogether defeated, and the wretched inhabitants, surrounded by filth and noxious exhalations, are ready to fall a prey to the first inroad of an advancing pestilence. More than this, our ruling powers are just awakening to the apprehension of the fact, that all that

has been done in this matter in times past has been based upon a wrong principle, and that much of it will have to be done over again before a satisfactory result is obtained. Hitherto the advantage of getting rid of the sewerage has been held to be cheaply purchased by poisoning the river into which it is all drained; but a wiser economy has shown that the refuse thus ejected through innumerable channels into the Thames, to the destruction of our home fisheries, might be made a treasure to the agriculturist, and a source of revenue to the city. We learn, from a report of the court of sewers published in 1845, that the ordinary daily amount of sewerage discharged into the Thames on the north side of the city has been calculated at 7,045,120 cubic feet, and on the south side 2,457,600 cubic feet, making a total of 9,502,720 cubic feet, or a quantity equivalent to a surface of more than thirty-six acres in extent and six feet in depth. All this, under the present system of sewerage, we throw away, and at the same time we are despatching vessels to foreign countries for guano to manure our fields. There is no great risk in prophesying that, at a period not very distant, we shall exercise a little more practical wisdom in this particular, and that, like the economical Chinese, we too shall fertilize our soil with the refuse of our cities.

We cannot walk the streets of London many days together without encountering evidences of the estimation in which the subject of sewerage is held by the ruling authorities. At one time we are startled by the spectacle of a narrow street, the houses of which are shored up with an elaborate frame-work of enormous beams and ponderous timbers, to prevent their coming down with a crash, in case the excavations, carried to a depth which the eye cannot penetrate, should loosen their foundations. At another, it is the blockade of Holborn or the Strand, and the turning of the swift current of their traffic out of its main channel into the back streets and by-ways; while a numerous gang of labourers, principally Irish, are employed day and night in sinking or raising the arched brick drain to a new level, which a fresh survey has found to be necessary. The prosecution of these works during the night affords a spectacle singularly picturesque: the swart faces of the workmen in their white shirts, lit up by the light of flaring torches; the cavernous gloom of the narrow pit in which they sink rapidly out of sight, to emerge again bending beneath a heavy load; the gleaming fire-flash upon their glittering implements as they rise fitfully out of the darkness; the dusky forms of figures dimly visible through the black shadows cast by the mounds of soil and rubbish which line the edges of the chasm,—these are some of the elements of the picture, which, contrasted with the cold and quiet starlight overhead, make up a scene at which a stranger will pause instinctively and gaze with interest. Not very long ago the good people of London were puzzled by the spectacle of a sort of watch-box perched upon the gilded cross of St. Paul's; and, at the same time, groups of men with scientific instruments were observed performing some mysterious ceremony upon the pavement in various parts of the town—north, south, east, and west—with a persistency which for some month or two never

relaxed. These strange fellows, from whom nobody could extract a word, were perpetually peeping through two holes in two boards at the watch-box on the top of St. Paul's. It was given out, by those who pretended to know something about it, that they were ascertaining the level at various points, in order to determine the proper inclination of the sewers; but friend Figgins the grocer knew better than that: as he very sagely observed, "People don't go to the top of St. Paul's when they want to dig a ditch in the street." Nevertheless, it certainly came to pass that there was a great deal of sewer digging shortly after, and simple folks suppose to this hour that the watch-box had something to do with it—which perhaps it had, for simple folks *are* sometimes in the right.

We said above that the sewerage is all thrown away—and so it is; but yet, in its dark underground passage to the river, there are, strange as it may seem, a class of men who contrive to snatch from it the means of a miserable subsistence ere it is lost in the bosom of old Father Thames. "There is no accounting for tastes," said a friend to whom we once mentioned this circumstance. "And no accounting for dire necessities either, which are much more likely than tastes to drive men to such desperate resources for a living," we replied. One of these subterranean explorers was once examined before a committee of the House of Commons. The tale he had to tell is too long for repetition: it is enough to say, that in order to live by his trade he had to work extremely hard, disgusting as was his occupation. He could only enter the sewer at the time of low water; he then worked while the tide flowed until it ebbed again; and if he miscalculated the time, as, having no watch, and not being able to hear the clocks, he sometimes did, he had to wait until another tide had ebbed before he was released. Being in total darkness, he had to carry a lantern, and was further compelled to take an active terrier with him to prevent his being devoured alive by rats, which he described as swarming there in myriads. His occupation consisted in grubbing beneath the open gulley-holes of the streets, and the small drains from private houses, for such small articles as were accidentally dropped or thrown away. He found more base coin than anything else; sometimes a silver spoon; and once he, or one of the same trade, had found a valuable watch. Instances have occurred where these men have been drowned by the rush of water occasioned by a sudden and violent rain-storm; and a more melancholy fate is recorded of one, who venturing in without a dog, and being shut in by the unexpected return of the tide, was devoured alive by the rats, leaving his bones alone to advertise his fate to the next comer.

We are not aware of the actual extent of the sewers throughout the whole of the London districts: if calculated according to the same ratio as the city itself, there must be six or seven hundred miles in length of underground drainage; but as we have shown above that many of the districts are lamentably deficient, this may perhaps be something above the sum total.

Let us now take a glance at the water supply of London, the next underground subject on our list. In the "good old times," as they are called,

which were very unclean and unhealthy times, London was supplied with water from the Fleet-river (which has long been converted into a covered drain, discharging itself into the Thames at Blackfriars-bridge), from the river Lea, from Walbrook, and from various wells, such as Holywell and Clerks Well, and from Tyburn. From the latter place water was first brought to the city towards the close of the 13th century. It was not, however, until three centuries later that an attempt was made to carry the water by pipes into men's houses, by means of an engine erected at London-bridge by a Dutch mechanist: it is true, that a certain wax-chandler in Fleet-street did, so far back as 1479, craftily pierce an underground pipe, and let the water into his own cellar for his own convenience; but his innovation was resented by the corporation, who adjudged him to do penance by riding through the city with a conduit upon his head. The business of the water-carriers, who fetched water from the public fountains or wells and sold it by the tankard, must have thriven well for many generations, seeing that it was not superseded by the domestic pipe system until the commencement of the rule of the Georges. The great undertaking of Sir Hugh Middleton, that of forming a new river to serve as a channel for the waters of the springs in the neighbourhood of Amwell and Ware, was completed in 1613; but it only brought the water to the principal thoroughfares, and has never even to the present time been able to afford a continuous supply to the population dependent upon it—a fact much to be regretted, as the New River water stands deservedly very high in public estimation. At the present moment there are seven water companies, all of which have been for a long time in active operation, carrying the indispensable fluid to the homes of the Londoners. Of these, five are on the north bank of the river, and two on the south. It is an unwholesome fact, that the major part of them derive their water from the Thames, into which some fifty millions of gallons of sewerage are daily disgorged, and which is thus made at once the cess-pool and the fountain of the metropolis. We have seen above that the city proper is far better provided with sewerage than any other part of London; the same may be said in regard to its water supply, of which not a drop is derived from the Thames, but the whole from the New River, with the exception of about a thousand houses supplied from the river Lea. The quantity of water contributed for the daily use of the inhabitants of all London is estimated at about forty-five millions of gallons, giving about twenty-three gallons to each individual of the population—an amount which, though it would be accounted enormous in a continental city, is yet far from sufficient, considering the many purposes to which water may be applied, and the inequality of its distribution under the present system of management. It is found that, while nobody complains of having too much, there are thousands and tens of thousands of the habitations of the poorer classes in which it is not introduced at all—whole rows of them being supplied from one common waterbutt or cistern, and that frequently in a state not fit for use. The outcry on this subject has been of late years very loud and long-sustained, and costly

inquiries have been instituted by government into the means of supplying the demand for pure water, and plenty of it, and freeing the public from the necessity of slaking their thirst in the poisoned current of the Thames. Rival companies have broached gigantic plans; some for carrying conduits up the river beyond the tidal influence, others for draining extensive valleys into a single outfall leading to a monster reservoir sufficient to serve the whole metropolis. The rapid increase of London in every direction will, in all probability, compel the adoption of some comprehensive plan which ere long will banish the tidal Thames water from our dwellings, and yield us a wholesome beverage in its stead.

Of the water-works at present in existence, those of the New River Company are by far the most extensive. Their resources have been much increased of late years by the construction of noble reservoirs, and it is probable that at this moment they furnish little short of one-third of the whole water supply of London. We have heard it stated, we know not on what authority, that the underground mains and pipes of this company, if laid down in a straight line, would extend for a length of four hundred miles. The East London Company, which is the next in magnitude, has its works on the river Lea, and traverses, with between two and three hundred miles of piping, the districts eastward of St. Paul's. It is remarkable that these two companies, which may be said almost to enjoy a monopoly of their several districts, and which dispense the purest fluid, supply it at the lowest price. In Paris, where a penny would buy a pound of bread, we have often given a farthing for a gallon of water; but in London, where bread is nearly double the price, the New River Company sell us thirty-six gallons of water for three-quarters of a farthing, and the East London Company the same quantity for a farthing. The pipes of the water companies, which permeate every street, lane, court, and alley of the town, are laid down so as to avoid the track of the sewers as much as possible: they lie generally at the side of the street, within a yard of the pavement, and at a depth of hardly more than two feet, which renders them readily accessible. They have communications with every house they pass, and in some with every room. In some of the southern districts the pipes of rival companies lie peacefully side by side, while their proprietors are battling above-ground for the patronage of the public. In most instances the main pipes are of cast-iron, and until lately we imagined that they were all of that material: walking not long ago, however, in a certain suburb, we were startled by the appearance of a little jet of clear water rising out of the gravel which did the duty of pavement in front of a row of second-rate brick dwellings. While speculating on the phenomenon, a handy fellow stepped up, and with a spade turned up the gravel to the depth of a foot or two, and revealed the ends of a couple of elm-trees with their bark on, and fitting one into the other like a huge spigot and faucet. These were part of the main pipes of a water company, which had sprung a leak at their junction; the workman stopped it in a moment with a plug, of which he produced a handful from his pocket, driving it in with a few taps of a hammer; then

filling in the earth again, he flattened it down with his spade; and in less than five minutes the mischief was repaired.

Like the sewers, the pipes of the water companies are subject to invasion by a race of penniless gentry who go routing among them for the sake of a living. These are the eels, who, in spite of all the precautions that are taken to prevent their getting into the pipes, manage yet to effect an entrance. Their adventurous spirit, however, meets but a sorry reward, as their investigations lead generally, so far as we can learn, to the frying-pan. An eel once in a branch pipe has nothing for it but to go forward; he is worse off than if in *Procrustes'* bed; he cannot turn round, and he cannot swim backwards, and the further he goes the narrower his prison becomes: by-and-by he is buried alive in a leaden coffin, which fits him as tight as a glove; he cannot even wriggle; he knows himself a gone eel, nothing better than a live cork stopping off the water from some fishmonger's kitchen; he feels his impending doom, and would tremble all over, but he hasn't room to do it; the difficulties of his position are too great for fish to bear; how he is to be released we don't exactly know; perhaps the turncock does, and to his mercy we must leave him.

Side by side with the water pipes, and sometimes crossing them at right angles, lie the gas pipes. Their turnings, windings, and ramifications are almost endless; and their length, which underground cannot be less than a thousand miles, is prodigiously more above-ground, and defies all attempt at calculation. Time was, and that within our own recollection, when the idea of lighting a town or even a house with gas was scouted as one of the grossest of absurdities imaginable. It was not until some years after the close of the late war that gas came into general use. The first London company was the Chartered Gas-light Company, whose works are in Horseferry-road, Westminster. We well remember the sensation produced by the laying down of the pipes, and the interest with which the process of fastening them together with molten lead and oakum was watched by the public—as well as the incredulity of the populace with regard to the expected result. It was not till success had been achieved that the people believed it possible, and then the apparatus could not be prepared fast enough to satisfy their demands. This was not to be wondered at. Before this discovery, London after sunset was in almost total darkness, just rendered visible by the dim blinking of oil lamps, which in times of fog were not to be discerned at all. In the days of our boyhood, a young lady would have been thought rash who should have walked alone from Charing-cross to St. Paul's two hours after sunset. Foot-pads waylaid travellers in Lincoln's-inn-fields. Then link-boys plied for hire as soon as darkness came on, and pedestrians found their services a safeguard as well as a guide. The descent of darkness upon the city was the signal for the swarming forth of hordes of abandoned wretches, who earned by plunder that subsistence for which they were too idle to work; while the only police were a set of superannuated watchmen, too weak to do more than waddle wearily under the load of as many great-coats as they could obtain by charity, and

whose guardianship was the scoff and scorn of evil-doers. In the main thoroughfares one half of the shops were closed at an early hour, and those which remained open, lighted but with two or three tallow candles, offered a tempting booty to the prowling wretches with whom robbery was a trade. The introduction of gas soon wrought an astonishing change in the moral aspect of London. The deeds which cannot bear the light shrunk away from it: the opportunity which makes the thief was wanting, and theft grew less frequent. What the sanguinary codes of our lawgivers, who hung up men and women a dozen of a morning for crimes of petty pilfering, could not effect, the blaze of the gas lamp accomplished: it reduced the convictions for shoplifting, and largely contributed to the repeal of bloody statutes which were a horror and a disgrace to our common humanity.

There are now above a dozen gas-light and coke companies in London, the names of which we need not enumerate. There are besides many working establishments which manufacture and consume their own gas. Some of these companies consume as much as 100,000 chaldrons of coal each per annum, and it may be that above a million of money is spent yearly in London in the purchase of coal for the manufacture of gas. The coke, however, which is nothing but coal deprived of its inflammable matter, yet remains for fuel, and has become so necessary for many manufacturing and other purposes, that in some parts of the kingdom, where the gas-works do not furnish a sufficient quantity, it is made from coal burned in kilns, the gas-producing elements being wasted.

From the purity and brilliancy of the light it affords, and from its requiring the least possible degree of attention on the part of the consumer, gas has largely superseded all other modes of lighting, and has given rise to various branches of manufacture, some of them in the highest degree ornamental. The gas-fitter of the present day is a constructive artist, whose labours adorn the palaces of the sovereign and the mansions of the nobility; he has banished the smell of the lamp from our public assemblies, and led a light more brilliant than that of day into the dark and secluded resorts of congregated labour. He has made gas available for culinary purposes by adapting it to the cooking-range of the kitchen, and for domestic comfort by substituting it for the coal-fire of the drawing-room. He leads the subtle element for hundred of miles through the solid ground, and carries it by invisible channels through the nooks and corners of your dwelling, and enables you to pour a flood of light wherever you choose with a touch of the finger. Further, if you reside too far from the factory to be supplied from the mains, he condenses the invisible fluid into portable cylinders, and despatches it to your distant abode at a cost still less than that of the offensive oil or obnoxious tallow. There is but one drawback attending its use, and that is the peril resulting from excessive carelessness. Now and then we see the front of a house blown into the street, and hear of fatal accidents from fires and explosions occasioned by the escape of gas. These things have, however, latterly been much less frequent than they once were, and they are clearly to be escaped altogether by the exercise of ordinary vigilance.

It remains now but to notice the fourth and last formed of these subterranean evidences of human sagacity and enterprise. Reverting to our supposed clairvoyant, to whose eye the stony ground should serve as a transparent medium—on looking for the means of effecting the most marvellous triumph which the united industry and genius of man has ever accomplished, he would see little more than a number of slender threads radiating from a common centre in Lothbury towards the various railway stations, where they are connected with the wires borne aloft on poles, the aspect of which is familiar to the reader. Along these wires the electric message travels at the rate of twenty thousand miles a second, and instant communication is thus obtained with any part of the kingdom furnished with the means of transit. Neither does the communication stop with the limits of the land; it traverses the sea, reaches the capital of France, the throbs of whose troubled heart pulsate in London, and dives across the Irish Channel, startling the ear of England with the lamentations of her desolate sister. Thus much has already been accomplished in the infancy of this new discovery: to what social advantages it will eventually lead it is vain as yet to prophesy; we live in an age of scientific marvels—marvels the bare mention of which would have provoked the withering contempt of David Hume and his whole school of freethinkers, and drawn down a storm of obloquy upon the head of any man who fifty years ago should have had the hardihood to have foretold them. It may well be that the use of the electric telegraph shall become as popular and as general as that of the railway is now—that the art of magnetic converse may become an educational accomplishment, and that man may enjoy the society of his friend after the fatigues of business, though a thousand miles of land and sea may lie between them. There is nothing even now impossible in such a consummation; and if there were, we have learned to think that the impossible is to be surmounted, from having surmounted it so often.

It is curious to reflect that the basis of this grand system of communication was the simple accidental discovery, that the electric current would deflect a delicately-balanced needle at an indefinite distance. This fact once established, it remained but to decide upon the signals which were to represent the different letters of the alphabet, and the system was virtually complete. To what other purposes it is to be applied, besides the transmission of intelligence and the diffusion of the true astronomical time, is yet to be seen. The generation which is to come after us will do more than tread in our steps, and will leave us, in all likelihood, still farther in the rear than we have left our sires.

Thus much for the under-ground world of London, from which we cannot part without asking the question, Why is all this accumulation of material wealth buried in the earth and suffered gradually to rot in her damp embrace? Why not construct sub-ways, having arched surfaces to form the roads, beneath which the sewer-drains, the water-mains, the gas-pipes, and the electric wires, each in their allotted place, would be readily accessible for repair or re-construction, without the

expensive and annoying process of ripping up the roads whenever they require looking after? Some years ago, petitions were presented to parliament by an ingenious architect for the adoption of a plan to this effect. We cannot think but that it would have been a wise economy to have legislated for the adoption of the scheme, and to have carried it into operation by degrees, as opportunities arose for so doing.

HALYBURTON AND LEO THE TENTH.

THERE are many ways of preaching Christ's gospel, without choosing a text, or standing in a pulpit. This glorious work is not confined to any time or place, or class of individuals. A Wilberforce could proclaim the gospel of love on the platform of Exeter Hall, or the floor of Parliament House. Thomas Cranfield preached to the boisterous rabble of Wapping, till, in their delight, they were ready to reward him with "three cheers" for his thrilling exhortation. Hannah More in the drawing-room, Elizabeth Fry in the prison-cell, Harlan Page scattering tracts through a city workshop, the dairyman's daughter murmuring the name of Jesus with her faint, dying voice, and the shepherd of Salisbury Plain leaning on his crook to talk about eternity to the passer-by, were all intensely earnest "preachers of righteousness." The church, however, has had few more faithful preachers than Thomas Halyburton, and his most impressive discourses were delivered on a dying bed. "This is the best pulpit," said he, "that ever I was in; I am laid on this bed for this very end, that I may commend my Lord."

The careful and erudite sermons that were prepared for the pulpits of Ceres and St. Andrew's are now well-nigh forgotten; but the savoury discourses that fell from his lips during the last month of his holy life will live, we trust, till the last saint shall go through the dark river. Let him who would learn how the sting of death may be plucked away, and how (to use Halyburton's own phrase) "a frail mortal may shake hands with the king of terrors," read the closing chapters of his Memoir. What a spirit must that man have possessed who could have recorded the death of a favourite son in such words as these!—

"March 23rd, 1712.—The Lord's day, a day ever to be remembered by me. O my soul! never forget what this day I reached. My soul had smiles that almost wasted nature. My kind colleague and I prayed alternately; oh! such a sweet day. About half an hour after the sabbath, my child, after a sharp conflict, slept pleasantly in Jesus, to whom pleasantly he was so often given."

To his wife, who stood weeping by his bed-side, he said when dying, "My sweet bird, are you there? I am no more thine; I am the Lord's. On the day I took you by the hand, I wist not how I could ever get my heart off you again; but now I have got it done. Do not weep; you should rather rejoice. Rejoice with me, and let us exalt His name together. We shall be in the same family in heaven; but you must even stay awhile behind." At another time he remarked to her, after a night of agonizing pain, "Jesus came to me in the third watch of the night, walking upon the water; and

he said unto me, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; I have the keys of hell and of death;' and then he added, 'He stilled the tempest in my soul, and lo! there was a sweet calm!'"

We have read of many sublime displays of courage in the dying hour, but never met with such a calm confronting of the king of terrors as the following passage displays: "I am not playing the fool," said he to his physician; "but I have weighed eternity during the last night. I have looked on death as stripped of all things pleasant to nature; *I have considered the spade and the grave*, and every circumstance in it that is terrible to nature; and under a view of all these, I have found that in the way of God which gave me satisfaction, not merely a rational satisfaction, but a heart-engaging power that *makes me rejoice*."

On the morning of the 23rd of September he went down into the dark valley. Yet he did not go alone, nor did the calm sunshine withdraw from his pathway, for in the even-time it was light about him. During the last six hours his voice failed him; but his angelic face was eloquent, and when he could not speak, he gently clapped his hands in triumph! So died the holy Halyburton.

In contrast with this peaceful departure of a simple Scottish pastor, may be appropriately placed the closing scene of one of Rome's most gorgeous pontiffs, Leo the Tenth. Who, as he reads the narrative, would have exchanged the heavenly tranquillity that reigned in the humble manse of St. Andrew's, for the disquietude that agitated the breast of him who lay breathing his last amidst the marble halls and silken splendour of the Vatican?

"Among the few memorials left us," says the author from whom we quote,* "of Leo's dying moments, is one of an interview between him and his favourite buffoon, in which the pope gave heart-rending expression to the helpless agony of his soul. Of all the friends who used to flutter around him in the summer of his prosperity, not one remained to comfort him in the dark hour of death, except Mariano, the jester of the court. The rest had already abandoned the departing pope, to pay court to his probable successor. But Mariano, touched with his master's forlorn situation, and grateful for the many instances in which Leo had shown him kindness, continued faithful to the last. Compassionating, but unable to relieve the pain which appeared to oppress the dying man, more in his mind than in his body, though the latter was suffering excruciating torments, the buffoon exclaimed, 'Holy father, reconcile thyself to God!' The poor pope, we are told, replied, as well as he was able, by sobbing out the words, 'Good God! good God! oh, good God!' and thus his spirit arose to the tribunal of the Judge. How sad a commentary is this narrative upon the words of Christ, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' It was remorse of conscience that distracted the mind of Leo—the conviction that his sins were unforgiven, and that he was therefore unfit to die. * * * Had Leo, instead of seeking

* See "Leo the Tenth," one of the Monthly Volumes published by the Religious Tract Society.

"to reconcile himself to God," been pointed to 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,' and sought to be reconciled through him, his faith in Christ's atonement would not have been rejected; and in the arms of death he might, for the first time, have tasted, greatly guilty as he was, 'the peace of God which passeth all understanding.'"

Reader! if death should surprise you as you *now* are, to which of the above closing scenes would your own bear resemblance? "To that of Leo," does conscience whisper? Ah! why should it be so? The joys which Halyburton, that man of God, felt, the Saviour yet invites you to partake of. The atonement of Christ, his finished work, his everlasting righteousness, the Spirit's quickening aid—all that gave tranquillity in the prospect of death—you are invited to accept, freely and without price. Lose not, then, in fatal irresolution a single hour; but "let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

THE MOUSE AND THE MERCHANT.

A HUNDRED years ago are old times to our generation. We know them only through books and pictures, which show us how fashions have changed and manners altered. Rude times they seem, too, compared with those in which we live. The school-master, the press, and the mechanic had not then done so much for our people. Nevertheless, prudent and pious men walked the world with our great-grandfathers, and among them there was one known to his correspondents as Mr. Francis Fairhold, merchant, of Cheapside, in the city of London.

The Fairholds had been notable in Cheapside ever since it was called West-cheap, or the western market. One representative of the family had helped to clear St. Paul's of relics and images; another had fitted out a ship at his own expense against the Spanish Armada; and one served as member for his borough in the long parliament. Their house had been almost desolated by the plague, and burned down in the great fire of London; but it rose from its ashes with the rebuilt city, and son had regularly succeeded sire therein till about the year 1753, when George the Second sat on the throne of England. Johnson, Burke, and Goldsmith were then in the morning of their fame, and Mr. Francis Fairhold was reckoned a substantial member of the honourable company of linendrapers.

Mr. Fairhold remembered the bursting of the South Sea bubble, the great frost, the last Jacobite rebellion, and was at the period of our story a discreet, middle-aged gentleman, plain of speech, friendly of manner, and attired, like the respectable citizens of the day, in amply-skirted coat, clubbed hair, and silver buckles. Mr. Fairhold was in high respect among the London drapers of those homely times. They knew his word to be as safe as his bond, his custom to be large, and his credit still more extensive. Moreover, there was not in the company a better judge of every article in his trade, from cambric to huckaback. Such were the bounds of linendrapery in those days. Cotton fabrics were

known only in the form of expensive muslins, brought from India in the company's ships, which used to wait at Deptford till the court ladies went down and bought their scanty stock.

The lawn aprons and gowns of printed linen, in which less aristocratic dames delighted, were sought in shops like that which occupied the front of Mr. Fairhold's solid brick house. Its two narrow windows, well-packed shelves, and low counter of scoured deal, the foreman behind it in a frock of dark blue cloth, with slate and pencil hanging from the breast buttons, and the two young apprentices equipped with scissors and apron, bore little resemblance to the establishment of a modern draper. Beyond lay the warehouse—a great room, more than half filled with piles of goods rising almost to the ceiling, and looking out on a dingy lane. There the warehouseman, the clerk, and the head apprentice minded their business, under the merchant's own superintendence; and from the best kitchen, hard by, the winding of the jack summoned one and all to meals at the same household board, where Mrs. Fairhold, an active comely matron, presided, with the help of her daughters Kate and Sophy, their old nurse, and her orphan niece, who had lived for years as attached and faithful servants in the family.

City dames from High Holborn, Bishopsgate, and the Vintry, in all the majesty of hat, manteau, and train, judiciously bundled up, resorted to Fairhold's shop in search of select lawns and real French cambric. Country shopkeepers, from the towns and villages of many a shire, came to purchase goods at his warehouse, in wagons destined to convey at once themselves and their merchandise. There were pleasant social meetings within the old house at Christmas and other holidays; for Mr. Fairhold was a lover of good men and of hospitality. The birthday, too, of every one belonging to the household was celebrated with festive honours. Night and morning the family were summoned to prayers, and down to the youngest apprentice Mr. Fairhold's entire household were regularly seen in their church-pew on Sundays.

A prudent and prosperous man in every sense was our merchant of Cheapside. Active, but not over-anxious for this world, he carried on his business with the steady and quiet industry of those old-fashioned days, giving time for recreation as well as work. His evenings were passed in household leisure with a city friend or two, who frequently dropped in to supper. When shop and warehouse were closed, on Saturday afternoons, he walked with his family to see their grand-uncle, the old farmer at Marylebone, then a village in the fields, or paid more ceremonious visits to his knighted cousin Sir Thomas, who kept his coach, and lived in the fashionable locality of Red-lions-square. Once a year, when business was slack, about the end of summer, Mr. Fairhold made a circuit of his country customers, to collect debts and square accounts generally. He had no son to succeed him in the fashion of his family, nor even a nephew, having been himself an only child; but thankful for two good daughters, the merchant did not despair of finding a successor, and took no trouble regarding the continuance of his house. The experience of others had taught him that even paternal hopes are not safe from disappointment.

He had seen sons turn out neither a comfort nor a credit; and the saddest recollection hanging about his own peaceful premises was that of a young and once promising apprentice, the son of his poor neighbour Widow Waterton, who had been a gentlewoman and called Madame in her day. Perhaps the boy's mother had spoiled him. Perhaps the love of gay company (as he thought it) had led his youth into snares; for in spite of care, admonition, and the good order of Mr. Fairhold's house, poor William had got acquainted first with strolling players, then with more dangerous characters, and at length, detected in an attempt to rob his master, he fled the city, and had not been heard of for years.

Grieved at heart was Mr. Fairhold, and he diligently inquired after his apprentice, in hopes, merciful man as he was, of reclaiming him. No intelligence, however, of the youth could be gained. His mother, a weak, worldly-minded woman, after fretting for some time over the disgrace he had brought on her genteel family, married an ill-doing excise officer, whom she had rejected with high scorn in her youth, and removed with him to one of the northern counties.

The remembrance of poor William Waterton served to make Mr. Fairhold more careful regarding his apprentices. Not that he had ever been remiss on that point. Our merchant was an upright, conscientious man, who felt that business had more duties for him than to get rich. No one under his authority had cause to complain of selfish exaction, or inconsiderate carelessness. His friends and family valued him for a mild and placable temper. His worldly dealings were just, his religion practical and sincere. Nevertheless, Mr. Francis Fairhold was not free of faults; and among them was a tendency at times to grumble at small and casual annoyances. Our merchant did not exactly lose his temper at every turn; but a spoiled dinner, or a room out of order, would vex him more than he cared to tell. Most of us, perhaps, bear great troubles better than little ones in proportion to their weight; but as the latter are by far the most abundant, that Christian philosophy which helps one to keep easy under them has a daily usefulness as well as dignity about it. Surely, a traveller to eternity should not be disturbed by every straw in his path; moreover, small evils may contain the seeds of great good, and Francis Fairhold was taught that truth by one of those wonderful works of Providence which prove to the Christian's mind that no instrument is weak in the hand of Omnipotence.

The wild rose had faded in England's fields and hedgerows; the hay was mown in all her meadows, from Kent to Northumberland; and the flush of ripeness was growing on her orchard boughs, when Mr. Fairhold, having regulated his books, duly committed his business to Johnstone the foreman, who had been in his employment fifteen years, and having taken leave of his family and most intimate neighbours, set forth with a good horse and a well-secured valise, with many good wishes, and commissions almost as numerous, on his yearly circuit among the country customers. This and the stage-coach or wagon were the only public modes of travelling in the time of our story; but

the latter, besides being a slower method, owing to bad roads and stoppages at every inn, could only be had on the principal lines of traffic, and never approached those small towns and scattered villages where our merchant's customers flourished.

Mr. Fairhold's journey, like his business, was quiet but regular. He was a peaceable man, and had always travelled safely, though there were bold highwaymen in those days, and the police system was far from its present completeness. His customers were mostly steady, methodical men, given to clear accounts and punctual payments. With many of them Mr. Fairhold was an old acquaintance, joyfully entertained at their houses in memory of similar hospitalities received in their great journeys to London. The landlords of all the respectable inns on his way waited for our merchant's coming year by year, as that of an important guest; and he rode on from one country town to another, through narrow rutty roads, familiar only with cart and wagon, at a pace varying between fifteen and twenty miles a day, attending to his horse's comfort as well as his own, settling old accounts, opening new ones, and depositing his receipts in a diminutive strong box constructed for that purpose in his valise. There may be readers of our tale who have never seen a specimen of that antiquated conveniency; but the valise played an important part in the travelling of Francis Fairhold's times. It was a species of leathern portmanteau, much about the size and shape of those ponderous folios in which laborious scholars then studied law and divinity, and was fastened to the back of the saddle by straps and buckles too numerous for the patience of our hurrying days. In the valise respectable travellers were accustomed to pack all their requisites, including money; and Mr. Fairhold had seventeen hundred pounds, the entire returns of his country business, besides bills and bonds, in the before-mentioned strong box, when, at the end of a seven weeks' circuit, he arrived at an old and favoured inn known as the Golden Lion, and standing on the ancient road between Farnham and Guildford.

The country is now studded with hamlets and farm-houses, but at the time of our tale a wild heath extended for miles along the base of the chalk hills, through which the road, little better than a modern sheep-path, wound with many a curve and angle. At one of these turns stood the Golden Lion, one of the oldest hostels in the county of Surrey. Travellers had resorted to that house before the civil war. Its quaint chimneys, low windows, and wide porch were wreathed with ivy; but its thick walls of timber hewn from the famous oaks of Sussex, its roof deeply thatched with reeds and oaten straw, were still proof against time and weather. The sanded space in front still contained the horse-block and the draw-well. Sounds of pigeons and poultry came from the yard behind, cattle browsed and corn rustled in fields scarcely separated from the surrounding heath, and, half inn, half farm-house, the old hostel greeted all wayfarers with the creak of its swinging sign, on which the forest king was represented in rather indefinite gilding.

For twenty years Mr. Fairhold had rested there on his homeward way; but as he now approached the house, late in a close, cloudy afternoon, with

great drops of heavy rain announcing a wet evening, he could not help observing that something of neglect and carelessness had grown about the Golden Lion. Its eaves were less trim, its porch less carefully swept and scoured, and in the best kitchen, which had always served for tap-room and parlour, things were by no means in the order he had seen them. The pewter on the shelves was dim; the once white walls were dingy; there was a smouldering fire on the wide hearth, and by it three slovenly, ill-looking men sat, each with a pipe and tankard. The landlord himself dozed in his elbow-chair in the chimney corner, and no ostler was to be seen. Mr. Fairhold made these discoveries before his arrival was perceived. He had thrown his bridle over the staple in the porch, and stepped quietly in, to the great surprise of the three, who saluted him with keen, suspicious looks; and still more to the astonishment of the host, who woke up at the sound of his entrance.

Changes had come over the old house since last the merchant saw it. Mrs. Hobbes, the honest active landlady, had been summoned from her domestic cares to the house appointed for all living. Mr. Hobbes had married the maid, and latterly taken strongly to old October, of which, like many a country innkeeper in his day, he was a notable brewer. Things in consequence were not as they had been at the Golden Lion; but Hobbes welcomed Mr. Fairhold with all the noise and bustle he deemed requisite for such an old and distinguished customer, shouted for the ostler and stable-boy to look after his horse, summoned Mrs. Hobbes the second to provide for his entertainment, and, with muttered apologies for the company in his best kitchen, marshalled him and his valise to the parlour. That room of pride, for such it had been to the former hostess, contained the chief treasures of the Golden Lion. There were the glazed cupboard filled with china, the eight-day clock, and the best bed hung with dimity. Mr. Fairhold thought the round table and oaken floor had lost the dark polish they used to exhibit; but the rain was heavy without, the evening was dark and chill, and he sat by the blaze of a bright wood-fire discussing a substantial supper after his long ride, and hearing, through the wooden partition which divided kitchen and parlour, the ostler expatiate on the weight and chink of his own valise to a number of inferior travellers whom the rain or Hobbes' strong ale had assembled.

The merchant did not much mind that, though he remembered one of the three ill-looking men shading his face with his hand while glancing at him, and wished the ostler had not guessed so correctly concerning his strong box. More solemn thoughts came as he looked round that old-frequented room. It spoke to him of life and its uncertainties. The busy, good-humoured landlady, whom he had known for twenty years, was gone; and the furniture by which she set such store, and which she took such pleasure in scouring, all were there, up to the silver tankard and the plated candlestick which flanked the Duke of Marlborough's picture on the chimney-piece: a coarse print in a clumsy frame it was, and Fairhold had seen it many a year, but never without thinking of an early friend. John Churchill Phillips (as his father had named him, because the boy was born

when the great duke's fame had the flush of Blenheim fresh upon it) was the son of a London draper, not wise enough to see the woeful waste of such victories, but sufficiently prudent and successful to leave him a flourishing business. He and Francis Fairhold were schoolfellows, and grew up friends. Their inheritance was of equal value. They married in the same year: Phillips named his eldest son after Fairhold, and stood godfather to his eldest daughter; but Phillips was in haste to be rich. There were games of speculation played in his time, and he joined one of them called the Morocco Company, which promised great things by shipping linen to the Moors. Phillips thought it would make his fortune; but losses by the Algerine pirates and defalcations at home broke the company, and his affairs were ruined. It must be acknowledged that insolvency was a more rare and serious occurrence a hundred years ago than it has since become in the mercantile world. Phillips was proud as well as weak: he could not bear the observation and exposure, and, leaving all in the hands of his creditors, fled with his wife and child, it was believed, to Ireland. Our merchant's recollections of him were interrupted by the entrance of Hobbes the landlord, who came, in recognition of his guest's quality, to tell and inquire after news, leaving the door ajar, as custom directed, for the gratification of his kitchen company.

"Call me at seven," said Mr. Fairhold, after informing his host that the Earl of Bute was still prime minister, and the Hanoverian succession likely to be secure; in return for which he heard of a foal with five legs and a bewitched dairy. "Seven will give time to reach Guildford before dinner; and I am so tired that a long sleep will be useful."

Hobbes retired, promising punctuality; and, having committed himself and his concerns to the care of Him who neither sleeps nor slumbers, Francis Fairhold was soon dreaming of his own good household and friends in London. The man slept soundly, for he had good health and a clear conscience; but as the din of pigeons, cocks, and guinea-fowl rose round the solitary inn at the summer sunrise, Mr. Fairhold was disturbed by something running across his face. It was a mouse. He saw it dart away among the white dimity, and, thoroughly disgusted, our order-loving merchant started up. Things were not as they ought to be at the Golden Lion! that was manifest; and he would never call there again. With these reflections he rose and dressed himself. It was hours before the appointed time, but the household were all astir. People rose early in the country then; the bacon, eggs, and strong ale, which formed a well-to-do merchant's breakfast, were therefore prepared without delay. The morning sun was shining on heath and hill, and though the road was miry with the last night's rain, Mr. Fairhold felt nowise inclined to stay. The kitchen company had departed over-night; but the ostler had the satisfaction of hearing the valise chink once more, besides receiving his yearly penance. The landlord poured forth his good wishes; Mrs. Hobbes came as far as the draw-well to make her parting curtesy; and with all the civility he could assume, our merchant rode on to Guildford.

The mouse had caused him to yield to his infirmity of grumbling; but the day was fair, and

his annoyance diminished amazingly, when, at some miles from his destination, he found the wagon, which had left that town for Horsham with the first light, sticking fast in a deep rut. The horses had broken their traces and fled over the fields, pursued by the wagoner and one of his passengers; while the rest, consisting of two Sussex farmers, a brewer, a butcher, and the master of a Portsmouth trader, stood in great trepidation regarding a noted gang of highwaymen, said to be somewhere in the neighbourhood. Our traveller cheered their hearts with the assurance that he had neither seen nor heard of them. The wagoner and his help had by this time caught the horses, but all endeavours to mend the harness proving vain, the latter offered to proceed with their new acquaintance to Guildford, and bring back assistance if possible. Such accidents were by no means uncommon in the travelling of those times. Ever ready to oblige, Mr. Fairhold at once assented to the proposal; and, by way of making haste, it was agreed that each should ride and walk by turns.

It was soon found, however, that the wagon traveller, who was little more than a youth, could get over the miry road almost as quickly as Fairhold's quiet horse; rapid progress of any kind was indeed impossible, and they beguiled the way with conversation. There was something in the active figure and honest, cheerful look of his companion which seemed familiar to the merchant's memory. He had a frank, courteous manner, too, which at once won Mr. Fairhold's liking; and as his dress spoke of respectability striving with narrow means, our merchant ventured, on the strength of seniority, to hint some inquiries touching his history and prospects. "My father," said the young man, "was once a prosperous London merchant, but speculation ruined him, and he died in comparative poverty in Dublin. My mother followed him early to the grave, and my boyhood was passed in beating about among our relations in Bristol. After that, I got my own living by serving two drapers in succession; but the first failed, the second was burned out. I have been trying hard for a situation in London, and, though little to my liking, it seems the will of Providence that I should go to sea with a cousin of my mother's, in whose company I was on my way to Portsmouth when our wagon stuck fast."

"What is your name, young man?" inquired Fairhold, earnestly.

"Francis Fairhold Phillips, at your service," said the youth.

"Then you are my namesake, and the son of my earliest friend," cried the merchant, grasping his hand; "you will never want a situation while I have a warehouse. My boy, I have got a lesson this morning against grumbling at trifles; but for a mouse which woke me up in no good temper, I shouldn't have left the Golden Lion for some hours later, nor have fallen in with you and the Horsham wagon."

Before things were fully explained, they entered the town; assistance was forthwith despatched to the wagon, and young Phillips, on a good horse from the Crown Inn, rode back to take leave of his mother's cousin. Joyfully he returned to join the merchant; and Mr. Fairhold, with his chinking valise and his new-found namesake, journeyed

safely on to the old house in Cheapside. There he found his family and business all as he had left them some two months before. The honest foreman gave up his temporary trust. The punctual merchant made his annual payments, and the house of Fairhold continued to flourish. Its master found in the son of his friend an assistant on whose business abilities and, better still, on whose sterling principles he could rely; and as his true worth became every day more apparent in home and warehouse, Mr. Fairhold was wont to remark how much, under Providence, he owed to that disturbing mouse at the Golden Lion, and how short-sighted he had been to grumble at what had been a blessing under disguise.

The good merchant had half made up his mind to call there on his approaching journey, when at the summer assizes, held at the Old Bailey, he was summoned to act as a juror on the trial of a man indicted for highway robbery. The case excited considerable interest of that morbid kind so common to mobs in all ages, for the man was believed to be the last of a desperate gang who had long been the terror of the southern counties. Mr. Fairhold felt the solemn responsibility of an English juror as his eye wandered over the crowded court and rested on the prisoner. He was a sullen, hardened man, whom the alternate want and riot of an evil life had made prematurely old. There was no trace of better days about him; but as his many *aliases* were read over with the indictment, the last of them was William Waterton. The evidence was clear, the facts were proved. The prisoner had been a companion of robbers, and active in breaking the laws of both God and man; but Francis Fairhold remembered the boy who had sat in his church-pew, and worked in his warehouse, and though conscience obliged him to concur in the unanimous verdict of "guilty," his reasoning brought the whole jury box to recommend him to mercy, in consideration of early seduction and a misguided youth.

The law had little mercy in those days; but the judge, being a humane man, as judges ought to be, supported the petition which Mr. Fairhold by great exertion got up, and the capital sentence was commuted to transportation. His good work was scarcely finished, when our merchant received a message one morning from the governor of Newgate, saying that the prisoner Waterton begged hard to see him.

Hoping an impulse of repentance might have caused this, Mr. Fairhold hastened to see his lost apprentice in the prison cell. The unhappy man was more moved than could have been expected at his coming, and when they were alone, said:—

"Sir, you have done a great deal for me, and ill I deserve it; but I couldn't cross the sea without speaking to you of one thing. You remember, almost a year ago, when you stopped at the Golden Lion on your way back to London. You had collected a deal of money, and I knew it, though you didn't know me, for I was one of the three men who sat drinking in Hobbes' kitchen. We were all of the same gang, and hearing that you were to go at seven next morning, we laid a plan to rob you at a lonely part of the road, and I meant to take your life, sir, because you had been my master, and tried to keep me in order. I have

lived to be thankful that we were disappointed; but, to this hour, cannot understand why you should have set out three hours before the time."

Readers, the chasm was wide between the pious upright merchant and the convicted felon; but both learned within the walls of Newgate what wondrous work an overruling Providence had wrought by a puny instrument. The mouse which disturbed Mr. Fairhold's sleep, and ruffled his temper, had been the means of saving his life, and through him that of his intended murderer. Even on the hardened mind of the latter the event explained by his old master made an impression which proved lasting, for hopeful accounts of him were heard from the penal colony. Francis Fairhold carried on business for many a year in Cheap-side, and made many a journey among his country customers, always calling at the Golden Lion. In memory of his marvellous escape, he had a broad seal engraved with the figure of a mouse, and this motto, "By it God preserved me." The modest, upright young man, whom he met on that eventful day, became to him a son through the special favour of his daughter Sophy. Kate wedded a neighbour's son, and lived close by her parents; but never did his increasing family gather round the good merchant's board, at Easter or Christmas time, that he didn't recall the event of the wayside inn with fervent thankfulness. Sometimes, too, he related it to impatient spirits, with this exhortation—"Never get out of sorts at small annoyances; they may be God's messengers."*

MASSACRE OF THE JANISSARIES.

At a time when the very existence of the Ottoman empire is menaced by its overbearing northern neighbour, and when, in the prospect of hostilities, the extent and capabilities of the Turkish army are being widely discussed, it will be natural for the thoughts of many Moslems of the old *régime* to revert to the fierce exploits of those early defenders of the empire—the Janissaries. The terrible fate of this intractable body of warriors will probably be remembered by most of our readers. So despotic and arrogant had they become, that there seemed no alternative between their destruction and the overthrow of the government. Their extermination, therefore, was resolved upon by Sultan Mahmoud, as a measure of state policy. The following picture of this dark page in modern Moslem history is extracted from a recent work of travels, entitled "Stamboul, and the Sea of Gems."

It appears that during the existence of this doubted body of fanatical warriors European travellers, instead of going about, as they now do, openly and alone, were invariably hurried, on landing from the water-side, to the house they were to inhabit, in the centre of a well-armed group of

chiaoushes and cavasses; while, in their excursions about the town, they incurred the most imminent risks if they refused to disguise themselves in the Turkish garb. To have entered a mosque then in a Frank dress would have been almost certain death; and a European lady had only the alternative of shuffling about in yellow slippers and white yashmack, or of being torn to pieces for appearing in her ordinary attire.

Those were the days when the native Christians, if compelled by business to be abroad after dark, slunk tremblingly through the dusky streets, quaking like a hare before the hounds; when windows were closely barred and doors strongly barricaded at nightfall, as parties of riotous Janissaries, looking enormously bulky and gigantic in their flowing robes, baggy trousers, and peculiar lofty turbans crested with a velvet sleeve in honour of Hadji Bektash, their founder, came swaggering and rolling along the streets, a perfect arsenal of weapons in their girdles, and their moustaches curling up to their eyes.

These unruly soldiers, wine and fanaticism combining to enhance their natural and acquired ferocity, would every now and then unsheath their yataghans and scimitars, shout "Allah! Allah!" and rush in a paroxysm of bigoted fury along the thoroughfares, assailing all such unfortunate Jews and Christians as they were able to overtake, and cutting them to pieces with their keen blades, as unmercifully and remorselessly as if they had been gourds or melons. On these occasions, when the Christian population within doors heard the well-known shout of the terrible Janissaries, they used cautiously to open their windows and admit the panting and half-dead fugitives, while in many instances the savage pursuers discharged their pistols through the lattices and doors of the houses in which their unoffending victims had found shelter. Europeans resident in Pera, too, were frequently insulted or wounded by these turbulent troops, who were never subjected to discipline, and who were only amenable to their own officers' jurisdiction. But although the Janissaries were the terror of the capital, and the masters of the Padishah, they were formidable soldiers and offered a firm bulwark to the attacks of the Russians. Their massacre, however, was a desperate remedy, like that of cutting off a large limb from some huge but diseased oak; and Sultan Mahmoud began their destruction, it is said, in a slow and cautious manner.

When the Greek war of independence commenced, the effervescence of their religious zeal (for the whole corps appears to have been thoroughly imbued with the old Turkish spirit) prompted great numbers of the bravest and best soldiers among them to volunteer for every expedition against the revolted vassals of the Porte. But after a long time the more sharp-sighted of them remarked with suspicion that of all who left Stamboul for the Morea not one ever returned. Treachery was loudly pronounced to be the cause of the protracted absence of their comrades, and, faithful to the traditions of their order, the haughty Pretorians mutinied *en masse*. Hussein Pasha and his master, Sultan Mahmoud, could not have devised a better scheme for their suppression than the one suggested by their own headstrong courage

* The reader is referred to a little volume, entitled "REMARKABLE ESCAPES FROM PERIL," noticed in a recent number of this journal (see p. 398), for many interesting anecdotes of preservation from danger through the instrumentality of animals.

and ferocity. Their fiercest champions were dead in Greece, their Agha Pasha was gained over, their officers were nearly all bought by the sultan, and the actual strength of the order bore no proportion to its numerical and nominal force.

Besides the men of the sword who had fought so long and so stoutly for the faith of Islam, there were enrolled among the Janissaries thousands of citizens who had purchased admission to the military order for the sake of its privileges and exemptions.

In the last revolt of these Moslem Templars, forty thousand fine soldiers quitted their barracks and drew up in the Etmeidan in battle-array to dictate to their chiefs and to the head of the state, as had been their wont for centuries. Very few officers were among them as they formed regularly in their respective Odas; the Bimbashis and other superior officers had been won over, and only a few subalterns had refused to be corrupted. Still, though a vague and undefined suspicion of treachery floated in the minds of the doomed Janissaries, their overweening and blind confidence in their own invincible valour did not desert them, and they left behind their muskets and pikes in their quarters, and rashly marched out into the open space of the Etmeidan, with no other weapons than their swords and pistols, without which they never stirred. Here they formed in regular order, around their favourite camp-kettles, those palladia of the Janissaries, the carrying about of which had been the signal for a thousand mutinies, the horse-tail standards and flags streaming proudly over their heads.

The Aga Pasha, their general, rode slowly along the lines, and inquired of what their demands consisted. The answer returned was, that the Janissaries required the abdication of Sultan Mahmoud, the heads of his viziers and the partisans of the Nizam Djedeed, or European discipline, the disbanding of the sultan's trained troops, the sack and burning of Pera, the destruction of the Ghiaours of every creed in the town, even of the European ambassadors at Bayukdere and Therapia; war with all Christendom, three months' pay, and a month's rations.

To these exceedingly reasonable requests the wily Agha Pasha returned for answer that he would at once proceed to the palace to inform the sultan of the wishes of his army, and that he had no doubt whatever but that he should be charged to bring them a favourable reply on the part of his highness. He begged them to remain in the Etmeidan, and to await his coming. "Keep your ranks, my brave soldiers," were the last words of the treacherous Agha Pasha; "I go to inform the sultan of your just demands. I shall soon return." And as the devoted Janissaries saw their leader depart, they uttered a thundering shout of triumph.

The Agha Pasha hastened to the Serail, where Sultan Mahmoud and Hassan Pasha awaited him. Hassan Pasha, like Changarnier during the June revolt, received *carte blanche* from the Padishah, and the Great Mufti having been summoned, the two pashas took the command of the trained troops, the Galiongees of the fleet, and the Albanians, while the sultan putting himself at the head of the Ulema, unfurled the sacred green standard of the prophet, which is always kept carefully watched

and guarded in the Padishah's treasury, and marched forth, displaying the banner, and calling upon all true believers to rally around the successor of the caliphs and the vicegerent of Mahomet. At that summons and the sight of the flag, the whole population of the capital rushed to arms as one man. The merchant brought forth his gun, the artisan his dagger or his yataghan, the smith his hammer, while the aghas and effendis rode out of their palace-courts at the head of their armed and mounted slaves, scimitar in hand. It must have been a strange spectacle to see this motley host hurrying to assail the stanch champions of Islam under the very crescent-standard beneath which they had so often and so valiantly fought against the most renowned knights among the steel-clad chivalry of Europe!

At the same time, a strong body of troops, trained in the discipline of the Franks, with some light artillery, moved upon the Etmeidan, and a considerable force of Galiongees and armed sailors being landed and united with a body of Albanian mercenaries, advanced slowly from the water-side. The batteries were manned, the port was closed with booms and chains, a flotilla of armed boats darkened the Golden Horn, and the vessels of war lay moored alongside the city, their cannon prepared, and the matches burning in the hands of the expectant seamen. Still, however, the Janissaries, blindly confident, remained drawn up in the square, while the distant shouts of the blood-thirsty multitude reached them from time to time. They waited till their Agha Pasha should return with the sultan's permission to march to the sack and spoil of Pera.

Suddenly their ranks were agitated and shaken to and fro like a forest during a tempest. The head of a column of regular troops had debouched into the Etmeidan. They saw that they were to be attacked; their old valour, their *esprit de corps*, sustained them; they greeted the disciplined troops with a shout of defiance and contempt; they were not sorry of an opportunity to measure themselves with soldiers trained by the detested Nazarenes. They turned to seek their arms, when lo! their barracks were in flames!

As they rushed despairingly towards their quarters, where they had left their muskets and spears, a masked battery opened full upon them. The grape-shot tore through their dense ranks, and mowed them down like grass. They fell back, rallied, and advanced; but a second time they were repulsed with dreadful slaughter. And now the artillery on the other side of the Etmeidan began to roar. Assailed at once by the troops of the Nizam Djedeed, the Galiongees, and the Albanians, the Janissaries, betrayed and surprised, yet proved true to the ancient glory of their order. They were lions at bay, and they fought gallantly and valiantly, opposing their short yataghans and sabres to the bayonet and pike, and answering the withering fire of the guns with their long pistols, as if in bravado. But it was all in vain. The grape-shot, plunging and scattering its showers of death around, ploughed through their closely-packed masses; treachery, too, was among them; their leaders were gone; none but a few inferior officers remained, and these fell as fast as they tried to reform the disordered Odas.

The great failing of the Janissaries, and the principal reason of their many defeats from Russian hands, was their irregularity and the difficulty of keeping them in order. On this occasion they were huddled together like sheep, or rather like a pack of grim wolves surrounded by the hunters.

All at once a vast mob, rudely and irregularly armed, but with the sacred standard in the midst, poured howling into the square, the muftis mingled with the people, exhorting and commanding them to slay. The white horse of the sultan was seen gleaming through the crowd at times, like the charger of Lafayette in the old revolution. And now the Janissaries knew that they were doomed, and hope abandoned them. They were fighting against their religion, their pontiff, their monarch, and the empire.

Nevertheless they went on, firing houses, carrying about the camp-kettles and horse-tails of their Odas, and attempting to burst through the fiery circle that pent them in, to die.

The grape-shot rapidly thinned their ranks, the musketry mingled incessantly with the yells of the multitude, who were eager to avenge the insolence and oppression of the haughty Pretorians, and who besides had the double stimulant of pious zeal and the gold chains and other ornaments that glittered on the persons of the Janissaries. There was no hope of rescue either; the Yammacks were disarmed, the Spahis disbanded. That turbulent force of feudal cavalry, that had so often ridden side by side with the Janissaries to battle, had been removed from Constantinople. But the array of these proud soldiers was yet too formidable to render it prudent for their enemies to assail them hand to hand. As African hunters content themselves with piercing the lion from a distance with balls and assagais, without daring to come within reach of his mighty paw, so the Stamboul mob contented themselves with hailing bullets on the crowded Janissaries, still declining the combat with the *arme blanche*.

The Janissaries were all picked men, and in form and feature the finest and most showy in the Ottoman empire. Some were Turks, others Cretans, Georgians, Circassians, and Bulgarians; many of them were the children of Christian parents, and almost all were accustomed to look with contempt on the bulk of the population. But their scorn was bitterly repaid on that day of massacre. The Etmeidan became a shambles. The furious crowd waded in blood, and stumbled over heaps of bodies as the carnage went on.

There was no hope of escape for the Janissaries. The frigates were volcanoes hurling from their flanks tornadoes of death against the fugitives who approached the water-side. Such as tried to swim the Golden Horn were picked up by the boats. The followers of Cortes were not so badly off in their retreat from Mexico. And at last the Janissaries broke out and fled in utter dismay, having for hours sustained repeated assaults without flinching. The bayonets of the troops drank deep of gore among the flying mass. Multitudes were slain by the mob, or hewed down by the yataghans of the fierce Arnauts, some were drowned, many were taken, hundreds broke out into the open country and were cut off by the peasantry, while but a few escaped pursuit, and found refuge at a distance. For

three days the sabre of the executioner was never idle; the blue waters of the Bosphorus were stained and sullied with red, headless trunks, and mangled limbs floated down the swift current.

At length the blue water ran down pure and clear again to the purple sea. The shuddering fishermen of Silivri drew to land no more dead bodies among the silvery fish that filled their nets; the headsman hung up his blunted scimitar;—the Janissaries were gone.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

I WISH I could as merry be,
As when I set out this world to see,
Like a boat filled with good companie,
On some gay voyage sent.
There Youth spread forth the broad white sail,
Sure of fair weather and full gale,
Confiding life would never fail,
Nor time be ever spent.
And Fancy whistled for the wind,
And if e'er Memory looked behind,
'Twas but some friendly sight to find,
And glad some wave her hand.
And Hope kept whispering in Youth's ear,
To spread more sail, and never fear,
For the same sky would still be clear,
Until they reached the land.
Health, too, and Strength, tugged at the oar,
Mirth mocked the passing billows' roar,
And Joy, with goblet running o'er,
Drank draughts of deep delight;
And Judgment at the helm they set,
But Judgment was a child as yet,
And, lack-a-day! was all unfit
To guide the boat aright:—
Bubbles did half her thoughts employ,
Hope she believed—she played with Joy,
And Fancy bribed her with a toy,
To steer which way he chose;
But still they were a merry crew,
And laughed at dangers as untrue,
Till the dim sky tempestuous grew,
And sobbing south winds rose.
Then Prudence told them all she feared,
And Youth awhile his messmates cheered,
Until at length he disappeared,
Though none knew how he went;
Joy hung his head, and Mirth grew dull,
Health faltered, Strength refused to pull,
And Memory, with her soft eyes full,
Backward her glance still bent—
To where, upon the distant sea,
Bursting the storm's dark canopy,
Light from a sun none now could see
Still touched the whirling wave,
And though Hope, gazing from the bow,
Turns oft—she sees the shore—to vow,
Judgment, grown older now, I trow,
Is silent, stern, and grave.
And though she steers with better skill,
And makes her fellows do her will,
Fear says the storm is rising still,
And day is almost spent.
Oh! that I could as merry be,
As when I set out this world to see,
Like a boat filled with good companie,
On some gay voyage sent.*

JAMES.

* Exquisite as this poetical description of human life must be admitted to be, it lacks the chastening influence of Christian sentiment. Had Faith been allowed to have taken her proper place in the company of her fair sisterhood, the illusions of the earlier stages of the voyage would have been in a great measure prevented, while her penetrating eye would have discerned the coming brightness concealed for the righteous behind "the storm's dark canopy."

Varieties.

TRAFALGAR.—This is an Arabic word, which means "The Cape of Laurels." It has been said by a recent traveller, Captain Peel, that had Nelson known the meaning of that name, it would have fixed a smile upon his dying lips. The moment of death, however, would have been a most unfit season for the indulgence of vain-glorious feelings.

PACE OF CAMEL-TRAVELLING IN THE DESERT.—"In crossing the Nubian desert," says Captain Peel, "I paid constant attention to the march of the camels, hoping it might be of some service hereafter in determining our position. The number of strides in a minute with the same foot varied very little, only from 37 to 39, and 38 was the average; but the length of the stride was more uncertain, varying from six feet six inches to seven feet six inches. As we were always urging the camels, who seemed, like ourselves, to know the necessity of pushing on across that fearful tract, I took seven feet as the average. These figures give a speed of 2·82 geographical miles per hour, or exactly three English miles, which may be considered as the highest speed that camels, lightly loaded, can keep up on a journey. In general, it will not be more than two and a half English miles. My dromedary was one of the tallest, and the seat of the saddle was six feet six inches above the ground."

PETRIFIED TREES.—In Nubia, at the "Hill of Leopards," as the cliffs at a certain place on the banks of the Nile are called, two petrified trees may be distinctly seen in the middle of the cliff; one of them is large, and its trunk projects straight from the rock. Its circumference, measured just above the swelling of the roots, is ten feet; the tree is a little hollow, and the bark can be easily distinguished. It lies on a bed of gravel between the sandstone, and evidently extends far inside.

CAMEL FARE IN THE DESERT.—Very little comes amiss to the camel. He will live on thorns and the top shoots of the gum-arabic tree, although it is armed with the most frightful spikes. He will also eat dry wood to keep up digestion, if in want of a substitute. Instinct has taught him to avoid the only two tempting-looking plants that grow in the desert—the green cusha bush, which is full of milk-coloured juice; and a creeper, that grows in the sand where nothing else will grow, and which has a bitter fruit like a melon.

PILFERING HABITS OF THE ARABS.—The Arab who accompanied Captain Peel in his recent explorations in Nubia, although one of the best of his race, and much attached to his patron, attempted the following barefaced act of theft. "I had ordered," he says, "two sacks of corn for our camels, and anxious that the gallant creatures should have plenty of food to sustain their great exertions, told the Arab he must fill them in my presence. Accordingly, his garment was spread on the ground to receive the heap, from which he measured the grain with most honourable precision. The first sack was filled and secured, but there was some delay about the second. In about an hour, however, it was brought in already filled and tied up. I asked the Arab what it was; he replied, 'Oh! it is the other sack, just the same as the first.' I said, 'Of course there is no doubt of that, but I told you to measure it out before me, and you must do it.' He tried in vain to evade it; so at last the sack was opened among a crowd of bystanders, the contents poured out, and he began remeasuring. A wink, however, had been given to one of the people, who, silently retiring for a time, returns in the middle of the very slow operation, and without the remark of any one, and certainly not from me, pours an apronful of corn into the heap. The sack is filled, and a few handfuls remain. 'A little over,' cried the Arab, with an air of offended honour; which was responded to by the crowd, and affirmed by me. So all parties being satisfied, I said to the Arab, 'Good! I want those sacks for a pillow.'"

THE CRESCENT MOON AS SEEN ON THE ADRIATIC.—"We had only gone a few miles from Venice," says a recent German traveller, "when I noticed, looking from the forepart of the vessel, a shining object, apparently swimming on the surface of the water. Whilst I was considering what it could be, two or three other passengers

came up, and were no less surprised and puzzled than I had been. It could not be on board of any vessel or at a lighthouse, for it was evident, as I have said, that it was floating on the sea; and, what was most perplexing of all, as fast as the boat went, we never got a bit nearer to it. At last an elderly lady, whose curiosity was, if possible, still greater than ours, despatched her waiting maid on a formal embassy to the captain to learn the explanation of this wonderful phenomenon. The ambassadress, whose return we all awaited with the utmost eagerness, came back in a minute or two, giggling vehemently, with an answer that she would confide to none but her mistress; and she, when she got the answer, seemed to be but little edified by it. All at once the difficulty was cleared up, for the wonderful object assumed the familiar form of the crescent-moon, which till then no one had recognised, and no one any longer doubted what it was that we had all been gazing at with so much curiosity. How the image of the moon could be in the sea, however, when there was not a trace of her to be seen in a perfectly cloudless sky, I could not make out; nor can I now, for, being afraid of being quizzed by the captain, I put off the satisfaction of my curiosity until the opportunity was lost."

DOMESTIC DISCOMFORTS OF VENICE IN WINTER.—A recent sojourner at this beautiful city describes, with much good humour, the inconvenience and suffering to which he was exposed during his stay, from want of a fire even in the public hotels, arising from the extreme scarcity of fuel. "The French Restaurant, for instance," he says, "has four or five large rooms, and in one of these—I have seen it with my own eyes—a fire is sometimes made; and if you are lucky enough to come in during the five minutes when the smoke has just gone off, and the three sticks are not quite burnt out, there is nothing to hinder you from warming your hands, unless indeed some frozen officers have got there before you, and placed themselves in front of the chimney. 'What's to be done in that case?' 'Why, then you must go and take a walk, as others do, on St. Mark's Place;' and so out you go. Happily the thermometer is not lower than two or three degrees above the freezing point; and you walk on St. Mark's Place, where you will find a thick stream of people; you swim with the stream, and go up and down, once, twice, ten times, twenty times. It may be very amusing, but after awhile you feel you have had enough of it. 'Over there is a little coffee-house, lit by four gas-lamps. Who knows? perhaps there may be a fire!' And so you enter, and find a climate in which you may exist, and if you choose your place well, even read the newspaper, without fear of chilblains on your fingers. But presently you become conscious of an icy draught of air that chills you to the bone; and behold the master of the house, who politely informs you that, fearing you might suffer from the heat of the gas-lamps, he has opened the back door. Making some incoherent reply, you rush through the open door in desperation back into the street."

"I had noticed," continues our traveller, "in the corner of my apartment, at the Hotel de l'Europe, a curious machine made of bricks; and near it a basket containing some slender sticks almost like toothpicks; and I thought I would try whether this machine could be meant to serve as a stove, and the toothpicks to represent fuel. No sooner said than done. I made the experiment, and found that the toothpicks really did burn; but even the machine was not warmed through by their combustion, and of course the room remained as cold as before. They offered to bring me some more sticks, but I had made the experiment satisfactorily, and I declined repeating it. And it was well for my purse that I did, for on my bill the next day stood a certain apparently jocular entry, 'Firing—one florin, twenty krentzers;' so that, if I had continued my fruitless attempts to warm myself for one day, it would not have cost me less than ten florins. When we consider, however, that the Venetians have to fetch their wood from Istria, which itself has no wood worth mentioning, it will not seem surprising that it should be scarce and dear."—*Rochau's Wanderings through the Cities of Italy.*